



– For Immediate Release –

Wednesday, October 8, 2008

IIMPACT detectives investigate drop house in northwest Phoenix *Six suspected human smugglers arrested and 11 UDA's rescued*

On October 5, 2008, IIMPACT Detectives learned that a couple who had illegally entered the U.S. were being held against their will. A caller told detectives the suspects were demanding \$6,000 for the safe release of the couple who were his brother and sister in law.

On October 6, 2008, IIMPACT Detectives began surveillance of a home at 9025 N. 36th Drive in Phoenix. As IIMPACT continued to investigate this incident, a vehicle left the residence. A traffic stop was made on the vehicle. It was later determined the vehicle was occupied by the main suspect, who was running the drop house, and his girlfriend.

At about 10:30 p.m. on October 6th, the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) Special Operations Unit executed a search warrant on the residence where they located the missing couple along with nine other illegal immigrants. Four male suspects were also found in the house along with a .38 semi automatic handgun. During interviews the victims stated they were held against their will at the residence and some were beaten, kicked and pistol whipped because family members were unable to come up with ransom money.

ICE responded to the address and took custody of the 11 undocumented aliens.

IIMPACT (Illegal Immigration Prevention & Apprehension Co-op Team) is a multi-agency project managed by GIITEM of the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) that is designed to address rising crime associated with illegal immigration. IIMPACT is comprised of personnel from DPS, Phoenix Police, ICE and the Arizona Fraudulent Identification Task Force (AFIT). As the name implies, local, state and federal police agencies combine forces to impact international human smuggling organizations operating in Arizona.

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